

# Indiana House of Representatives

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## News and Information

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### **PIERCE PROPOSES BILL TO BAN LIMITS ON USE OF HISTORIC THEATERS**

INDIANAPOLIS – Movie theater owners who sell their buildings will not be able to prevent future owners from showing films in those facilities if legislation authored by State Rep. Matt Pierce (D-Bloomington) becomes law this year.

"It's time to put a stop to a practice that deters the preservation of historic theaters and blocks any opportunity to keep a movie theater in operation," Pierce said. "It is clearly a restraint of trade that limits competition."

House Bill 1308, now eligible for consideration in the 2005 session of the Indiana General Assembly, would void restrictions in future real estate sales that prevent movie theaters from continuing to be used to show films.

Pierce decided to introduce the legislation after restrictions were placed on former theaters in Bloomington and a Monroe County court ruled the restrictions did not violate current law.

"While it may not be economically viable for a building to continue being used as a theater, an entrepreneur or non-profit group should at least have the opportunity to try preserving its original use," Pierce said. "I don't think it is good public policy to let an existing theater owner limit potential competition."

The Indiana Department of Natural Resources' Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology has launched an initiative to preserve downtown theaters. Pierce hopes passage of House Bill 1308 will make it more likely that historic theaters in small towns around Indiana can be preserved as important parts of a community's downtown.

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